



Chris Tharp/Index

The Bulldog volleyball team enjoys one of its superstitions during Saturday's match against Washburn University. Before every game, the squad says a prayer and then jumps up and down while screaming at the top of their lungs.

SUPERSTITION | Many Truman sports teams have own unique rituals and traditions

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every day the same. I can't do all the things I used to do, like eating a certain meal before a game because that would mean eating the same meal four days a week."

Still, Mundy has kept a few around.

"Most of my superstitions are based upon how I did the previous time out," he said. "If I played the well the last time, I'd wear the same socks or the same sliding shorts or undershirt. I try to keep anything I could the same."

Mundy also said he tries to wake up to the same music if he played well the day before.

Superstitions and rituals aren't just individually-based, however. Most Truman sports teams take part in their own traditions.

The men's cross-country team often eats at Fazoli's the

night before a meet if the host town has one, head coach Ed Schneider said.

Before every match, the volleyball team circles up, links arms and says a prayer. After the team finishes, the women yell as loud as they can and jump up and down, moving to the left and right.

Brock said the men's basketball team has a few rituals, as well.

"Right after starting lineups, Austin [Kirby] always says funny comments to try to get everybody pumped up," he said. "He tries to get really intense, but it's actually kind of funny."

Brock also said that if the team wins an away game, they take off their shirts on the bus ride home.

"Every time we start doing something and we lose, we'll change what we do," Brock said. "I guess we're supersti-

tious that way."

The baseball team has many superstitions as well, manager Lawrence Scully said.

"A lot of guys will do a rally-cap," Scully said. "Or they'll put their hat on top of their head so it will look like a shark in the water to try to do a comeback."

Members of the team also jump over foul lines, sit and stand in the same spot as they were in the last time they scored a run and won't talk to a pitcher who is pitching a no-hitter.

The team also performs rituals Scully doesn't know about.

"There's something the team does that I don't pay attention to," Scully said. "But I think when it's two balls and two strikes, they're doing something with their hands. I don't know what it is."

Mundy demonstrated the act, which is known as "Deuces."

The players rub their pointer

and middle finger and thumb along the edge of their bill when the opposing pitcher is winding up.

Right before he releases the ball, the players take off their hats, turn them upside-down and shake them.

"Different teams have different variations," Mundy said. "That's a superstitious thing that keeps you from getting out."

So do superstitions actually work?

"They probably just make me feel better and comfortable in the game," Brock said. "But I'm not sure they really work too much."

Mundy, however, said he believes superstitions can boost one's self esteem.

"It can work if you believe that it gives you confidence," he said. "But in the same manner, it can be a detriment if something gets thrown off. That just screws up the rest of everything."

NHL | New rules could increase fan support

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goalie's standpoint the shootout is more exciting.

"The whole game comes down to you," LePage said. "It's fun to have that pressure."

Besides the rules, the NHL has seen a great deal of personnel changes this year, including Wayne Gretzky's decision to come back to the NHL as coach of the Phoenix Coyotes.

LePage said he is not too worried by The Great One's re-appearance.

"I don't think it will make that much of a difference really," LePage said. "Just because Gretzky was a solid player doesn't mean he'll be a good coach, especially since he is Gretzky, and a lot of people are going to be intimidated by him."

Also, the league is making room for a lot of new players this year because of the

missed season. Sidney Crosby, the number one draft pick from Minnesota, went to the Pittsburgh Penguins.

Coached by hockey great Mario Lemieux, Crosby is often referred to as the new Gretzky.

A little closer to home, the St. Louis Blues have lost long-time defenseman Al MacInnis to retirement.

Senior Jim Coverstone said MacInnis has been his favorite player since the Blues acquired him in the 1994-95 season.

"He was a really powerful defenseman," Coverstone said. "I've always liked MacInnis, the hardest shot in the NHL."

Coverstone said he hopes the lockout will not result in the loss of the fans' support.

"I just really hope that hockey becomes more of a staple in the United States," Coverstone said. "Hockey is a great sport to watch."

Is volleyball losing steam?

Last 3 matches Season

	Last 3 matches	Season
Hitting %	.172	.249
Kills/game	15.9	16.7
Assists/game	15.0	15.5
Errors/game	1.4	1.0

Designed by Lindsey Koski/Index

VOLLEYBALL | Team loses matches

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she said. "We have all the abilities. We just aren't mentally tough. We produce too many unforced errors that just give the other team points."

Saturday was Senior Day for the Bulldog volleyball team. Before the match, the squad recognized Remley, Jones and fellow senior middle hitters Micaela Walter and Tiffany Graham for their contributions during their careers.

The squad came out firing early, winning game one by a score of 30-23. However, the unforced errors that have plagued the team recently came back to haunt them once again when they dropped game two by a score of 30-19.

Games three and four were highly competitive contests. When the 'Dogs had the momentum, they allowed the Washburn Lady Blues to get back into the match. A series of key service errors ultimately doomed the squad as they dropped both games by scores of 30-28, 30-26 to lose the contest.

Skocho said he saw some good in the close loss to Washburn.

"Kelsey was taking charge of the team," he said. "I called for her to stay down on her serves, and she goes, 'Coach, I want to jump serve.' The game is tight and she wants to take charge, which is a good sign she wants to lead."

Three of the four seniors played their final regular season home game Saturday. Walter was the only senior who did not see action.

Skocho said it was a tough decision to keep Walter out of the game.

"That decision was terrible, and I hope she takes it well," he said. "I am not going to play a senior just

to play her. Wednesday and Friday night, she had bad games, and Saturday was a must-win game. I put Tiffany in, and she was great and Megan Remley was incredible. The chance for her position never came open. I think she'll come in on fire this week and earn her spot back."

Graduate assistant coach Jessica Sears said she understood the decision Skocho made.

"I think it's unfortunate that she didn't play," Sears said. "Coach put in the lineup that he thought could win."

With the conference season winding down, the 'Dogs find themselves in unfamiliar territory, tied with Central Missouri for second in the MIAA conference with an 8-3 record. Also, the 'Dogs almost are assuredly out of hosting the South Central Regional. If the 'Dogs finish second in conference behind Washburn, there will be one final home match, the conference semifinal.

Friday, the purple and white travel to Missouri Western State University to take on the Griffons. Saturday, the Bearcats of Northwest Missouri State University will host the Bulldogs the following day.

Wackerman said it will not take one specific person to remedy the squad's lack of leadership.

"Everyone can do it," she said. "When all six of us can do our job, we perform to the best of our abilities."

Wackerman also said the team was looking forward to the return matches with the University of North Alabama, Central Missouri, Emporia State and Washburn.

The 'Dogs could face all four teams in the playoffs and will oppose UNA on Nov. 5

SOCCER | Birrell, Gaudreault both score two goals against University of Missouri-St. Louis

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in the second half as the 'Dogs scored three goals in less than three minutes to put the game out of reach for the visiting Rivermen. The first goal of the trio was scored by Birrell off passes from Gaudreault and senior forward Paul Link. Sophomore forward Drew Vogt tallied a goal moments later off a feed from Claves, and Birrell finished the barrage just 21 seconds later as a result of another pass by Claves, giving the 'Dogs a five-goal lead.

"We've been playing well up front, but it feels good to finally chip in a couple goals to help teammates," Birrell said. "In the past, this team's caused us problems, but it gives us a lot of confidence going into next weekend."

Gaudreault finished the assault in the 73rd minute finishing a cross from Pottgeisser. Senior back Jared Atwood was also credited with an assist on the play.

"It's really good for the team morale that we were able to put in six [goals] against Missouri-St. Louis," assistant coach Andy Lakers said. "We've been working hard to get all the forwards to play well together and it showed Sunday."

The team sits in fourth-place in the latest Great Lakes Regional poll, keeping them just on the outskirts of the playoffs right now. However, this weekend likely will seal the deal one way or the other.

The Bulldogs travel to Rock-



Chris Tharp/Index

Sophomore midfielder Wes Frevert looks for a teammate upfield against the University of Missouri-St. Louis on Sunday. Frevert was issued a yellow card for a rough tackle in the Bulldogs' 6-0 victory.

hurst University in Kansas City, Mo., on Sunday afternoon for a noon start. The Hawks are second in the Great Lakes region with an 11-3-1 record with one game to play before Sunday's meeting.

If history repeats itself, then the 'Dogs should have success, as the visiting team has won the last nine games against the Hawks.

"We're just going to go in the same way we have in the past few

games because it's almost playoff time, and if we lose, we're [likely] done," Gaudreault said. "Every game is just as important, and we're going to take them just as seriously as everyone else."

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